



# rEAP the Benefits

State Employee Assistance Program 1-800-308-4934

## Suicide, more common than you think

Suicide is a major public health problem on national and state levels. Although suicide is the ninth leading cause of death overall in Tennessee, it is the second leading cause of death within adults aged 25-34, third leading cause among youth aged 15-24. Tennessee's rate of suicide (14.4 per 100,000 people) is the thirteenth highest in the nation.

Suicide occurs across all ethnic, racial, economic and social groups. Four times as many men die by suicide but three times as many women attempt suicide. Suicide is the most preventable form of death; most suicidal people desperately want to live, they just can't see a way out of their problems. Help them by giving them the number of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK). It will connect the caller to a crisis center near them where counselors can provide immediate and confidential help. It could save a life.

For more information about suicide, refer to the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network's (TSPN) web site, [www.tspn.org](http://www.tspn.org).

## Tackling the thief of time

It's been said, "Procrastination is the thief of time." But it's not the task you are avoiding; it's the magnitude, size, or pain linked to the task. Reduce the pain and you will start moving forward. Divide any task into three to five steps. Make the first step small and no longer than five minutes in duration. Begin. Subsequent steps will probably follow immediately or shortly after. If you procrastinate at step two, apply the formula again beginning with that step.

## Walk for your health and your wallet

Walk for your health's sake and your wallet's too, especially if you are financially responsible for any of your own health care costs such as copays for doctor office visits, medications, etc. Research from the Health-Partners Research Foundation (reported primarily to business organizations, not consumers) demonstrated that adults, especially those older than 50, who remain active and exercise regularly will significantly reduce health care costs to employers. Logically, if employers are saving money so are you!

Source: Preventative Medicine (Journal), Oct. 2003.

## What your employer really wants

The "goals" section of a job description is often the shortest part. You know the many duties, but do you know what the organization expects and hopes you will accomplish? Sometimes this is not clearly written and it can change throughout the year. You have to pay attention. Every job description includes powerful but often untapped leverage to help the organization meet its goals—which can also be the secret to your success. Learn to see beyond the black and white of the printed job description, and instead understand its scope. Also, pay attention to two things: what issues concern your boss and those issues that concern your boss's boss.

## Intervene early with coworker conflicts

When conflict with a coworker begins, act early to intervene. You could save yourself years of anguish, and potentially turn the relationship into a beneficial one. Avoid denying or suppressing your feelings of anger as a coping strategy. As conflict worsens, the risk that you will act irrationally in response to a provocative moment increases. When this happens, management will often hold each of you equally accountable in the conflict and equally responsible for its resolution. You will feel frustrated if you see yourself as the victim. Managing conflict is a life skill; so avoid the mad dash for a book on "dealing with difficult people" once it's too late to rediscover harmony with your coworker. To head problems off at the pass:

- Let your coworker know you are sensing conflict at the time it occurs
- Share your feelings in response to an issue or concern and which "rights" you feel are being ignored
- Ask for the change you need

Important: Success comes by getting the change in behavior that works for you, not by making a coworker feel punished or blamed.

## Hazards around the house

Accidental death in the workplace is the key concern of safety professionals. However, did you know that the next most dangerous place for unintentional fatal accidents is the home? Household members older than 70 and younger than five are at the highest risk. People over 80 years of age are twenty times more at risk. The biggest killer are falls—about 42 percent. June is National Home Safety Month, sponsored by the Home Safety Council. A lot is going on at this time of year—lawn mowing, barbecuing, swimming, gardening, and more—so the number of accidents increase accordingly.

*Source: Home Safety Council*

## Your first appointment with a professional counselor

If you have made a decision to see a professional EAP counselor, you may be wondering what to say when you get to your first appointment. After completing the necessary paperwork, your counselor will help guide the interview. If you think about the following issues before arrival, you can maximize the time you spend in your first session. (Don't worry—you won't have to share your deepest thoughts, fears, hopes, and dreams with a stranger in the first session.) Your counselor wants to listen a lot at first because you are the expert on your life. The main concern is determining if he or she has the skills that are a good match for your needs. Knowing what prompted you to come, what difficulties you are facing, what you think caused the problem, and what you think might help resolve it are very important. Include what you are currently experiencing, what's bothering you, and what things you want to be different in your life. Now you are ready for a great learning experience through professional counseling.

## Using communication to resolve conflict seminar

This seminar is designed to help you understand how conflict develops and discover a conflict resolution process. A personal self-assessment of one's communication style will be explored along with an action plan to use in the future. Seminars will be held in the following locations.



The time for all seminars is 1:00–2:30.

6/10	Martin	6/11	Memphis
6/12	Jackson	6/17	Greenville
6/18	Cookeville	6/19	Knoxville
6/19	Nashville	6/24	Murfreesboro
6/25	Chattanooga		

To register, go online to [www.tn.gov/finance/ins/eap/](http://www.tn.gov/finance/ins/eap/) or email [employee.assistance@tn.gov](mailto:employee.assistance@tn.gov).